



TALKING POINTS

The Kansas Brand Image Task Force

The Kansas Brand Image Task Force was developed as a direct result of recommendations made at the 2003 Prosperity Summits. The Prosperity Summits, made up of business people from every region of the state, identified key priorities for economic growth in the state of Kansas, the most consistent being the need for a strong state image. Community, business development, and tourism leaders from throughout the state populate the State Image Task Force, representing each of the Prosperity Summit regions.

The Task Force Process

Members of the Task Force participated in a process to articulate the essence of the Kansas brand through an authentic statement of Core Values, the first stage in creating the critical components necessary for an effective brand image. Task Force members engaged in full-day working sessions in Salina on April 6, April 27, May 20, September 2, October 28, and November 30.

Additional Research

In addition to research conducted with Task Force members, the Kansas Department of Commerce conducted extensive research to identify out-of-state perceptions, attitudes, and opinions about the state. Research included qualitative interviews with business development consultants, out-of-state consumers, travel writers, and key legislators. Quantitative studies were conducted with Kansas travelers and a cross-section of out-of-state consumers. A competitive analysis of the branding efforts of other states was conducted, and secondary research was evaluated to assess the primary opportunities for Kansas.

Research Summary

Kansans view Kansas as the center of America, where you can still trust a handshake, and get things done. It's a place where our limitless horizons beg us to dream and create. Many Kansans appreciate our rich history, and recognize that we have often been on the cutting edge of cultural change and conflict.

Out-of-state business people and consumers often have an unclear image of Kansas. They see Kansans as honest, trustworthy, hardworking, and friendly. Their image of Kansas is flat, with wide-open spaces, and when they visit they are often surprised by its green, rolling hills. Visitors most enjoy Kansas' historic attractions.

Travel trends that provide opportunities for Kansas include the interest in history/culture, agri-tourism, geo-tourism, and authentic experiences.

Positioning

The positioning for the state of Kansas was developed as a culmination of all the research. It states the distinctive position the Kansas brand owns. It is the platform for the communication strategy for the state of Kansas, driving one consistent message for tourism, business development, and the rest of the state.

Based on what is authentic, distinctive, and relevant to our target audiences, the following positioning statement was developed:

In Kansas, our wide open spaces give people the freedom to dream and make big things happen.

What's next

- An industry and media e-mail teaser campaign began on December 7th
- State tagline and image creative elements to be introduced on January 7th
- An in-state image campaign to launch on January 9th
- Tourism advertising in national print media during the travel planning session
- Business development advertising and communication in early spring